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Title: Fast execution of throw-off after a goal was scored – theoretical explanation and methodology.

In the last ten or fifteen year's handball became a very fast sport game. The most evident practical changes are:

- many attacks finished in a few seconds – there are no more very long and slow attacks with many interruptions,
- as a consequence of this fact - many turnovers,
- almost all attacks begin with fast break,
- **in the last years players try to execute as much as possible the fast throw-off,**
- in average teams scored more goals per match.

The main reasons why it happened are following:

- changes of the rules,
- better defences – it's very difficult to score a goal against formatted zone defence,
- better and more appropriate physical, technical and tactical preparation of the players,
- demands of the spectators.

It has been observed during many handball matches that the team which has conceded a goal tries to gain advantage over the team which returns to the defensive position by taking a quick throw-off.

This type of throw-off execution has become an almost indispensable element of the tactics of many elite handball teams. In different ways, it is also used by teams of inferior quality.

The objectives sought to be attained are various. The following deserve particular attention:

1. The first and most important objective is to score as many goals as possible in situations when the opponent has not formed a zone defence properly after having scored a goal.
2. The team which successfully takes a quick throw-off after having conceded a goal influences the opposing team's tactics of returning to the zone defence formation. It is very important that the alternating of the players between attacking and defensive positions is rendered very difficult so that the optimal defensive formation of the opposing team is hindered.
3. Psychological effects – a goal scored after a quick throw-off is a great encouragement for the scoring team and damages the opposing team's self-confidence. Players must be trained to stop thinking about the received goal and instead focus on immediate attack by taking a quick throw-off. This helps them eliminate negative feelings and prevent them from potentially accusing each other. They are trained to think positively and immediately engage so as to develop play.
4. Certain strengths of the team or of individual players are brought to the forefront – better conditioning, technical and tactical skills as well as psychological preparedness.
5. Appropriate training in the execution of a quick throw-off serves as a basis for improving the players' conditioning as well as their technical and tactical knowledge in difficult circumstances.

However, taking a quick throw-off is associated with many risks:

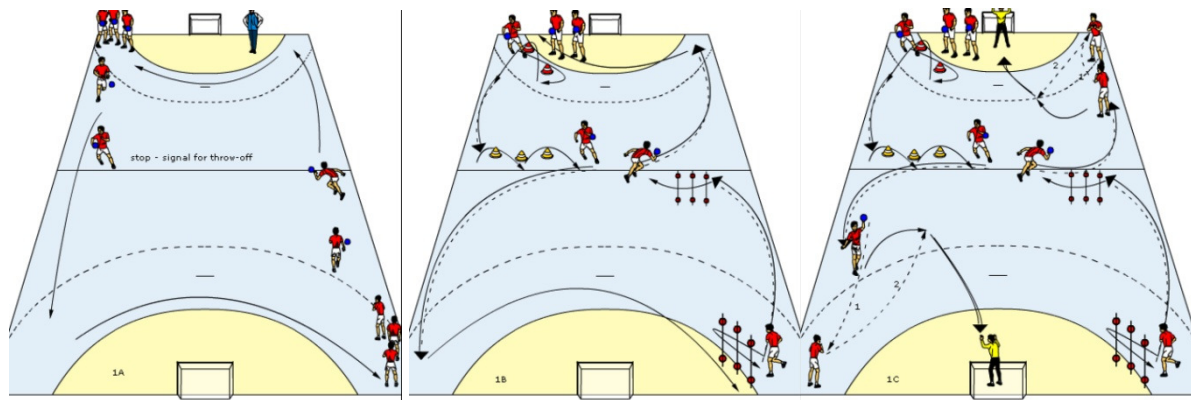
1. It requires a high level of conditioning.
2. There is a high possibility of technical and tactical errors.
3. Control over the playing situations during the match can diminish.
4. An optimal player positioned on defence is many times not optimal for executing a quick throw-off (defence specialists) and thus diminishes the efficiency of the execution. However, it can be a good opportunity for those players who play defence more than on attack to display their defence skills.

The above problems can be reflected in a negative result and lead to the conclusion that the team rushes thoughtlessly without considering the concrete situation.

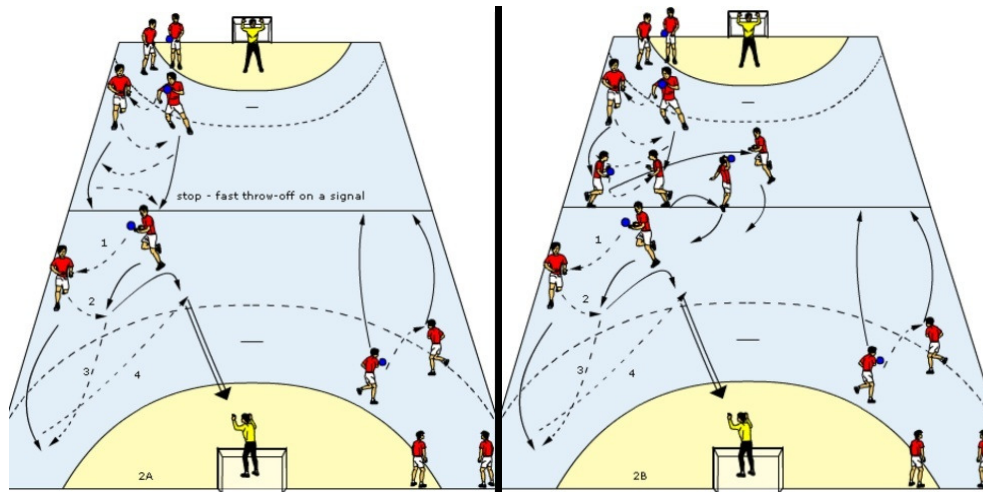
Certainly with this changes toward faster game, also methodical approach in training change a lot. It is therefore extremely important that during training sessions and preparation matches, the players are trained to execute a quick throw-off after a goal. It is recommended that the coach prepare a selection of different exercises aimed at improving the quality and efficiency of all activities following a goal. The exercises must be structured in such a way as to enable the tactical adaptation of players to concrete circumstances occurring at the moment of a quick throw-off. Players must also learn how to identify different situations resulting from the received goal and the reaction of the opponents on their return to defence, and respond accordingly. The ability to change pace and build a suitable attack is of outmost importance in such cases.

I will try to give some examples of the exercises which can contribute to better preparation of the players for the fast execution of throw-off.

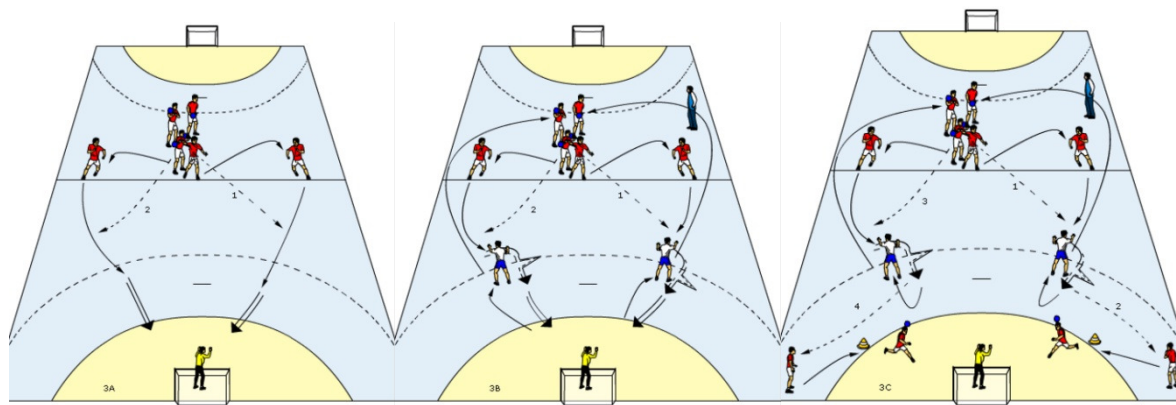
Description of exercises:



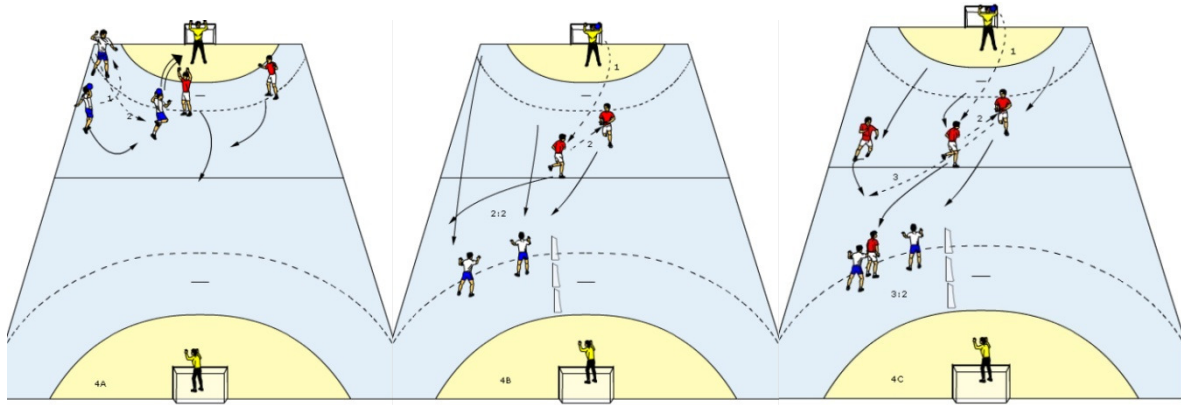
Exercise 1: We built up two groups of players. They stand in the diagonal corners of the playground with the ball in the hands. Players start to run with the moderate velocity and bounced the ball (both groups simultaneous). At the middle line they stopped for the moment, give them-selves a signal (for example “HOP”) and start bouncing the ball toward the corner at the other side of the playground. The velocity of running is higher than before (including powerful acceleration at the beginning). At the end of the playground they execute basic defence movement along the goalkeeper’s area (Figure 1A). In the next step players execute at the start and at the middle of the court some coordinative movements. Execution of throw off is in the centre of the court (Figure 1B). In the third step players can collaborate with wings or pivots with a simple tactical means – two passes and shoot on goal (with the intention to warm-up the goalkeeper). Players on the wing position could be either substituted after any action or they remain on the position during the whole exercise (Figure 1C).



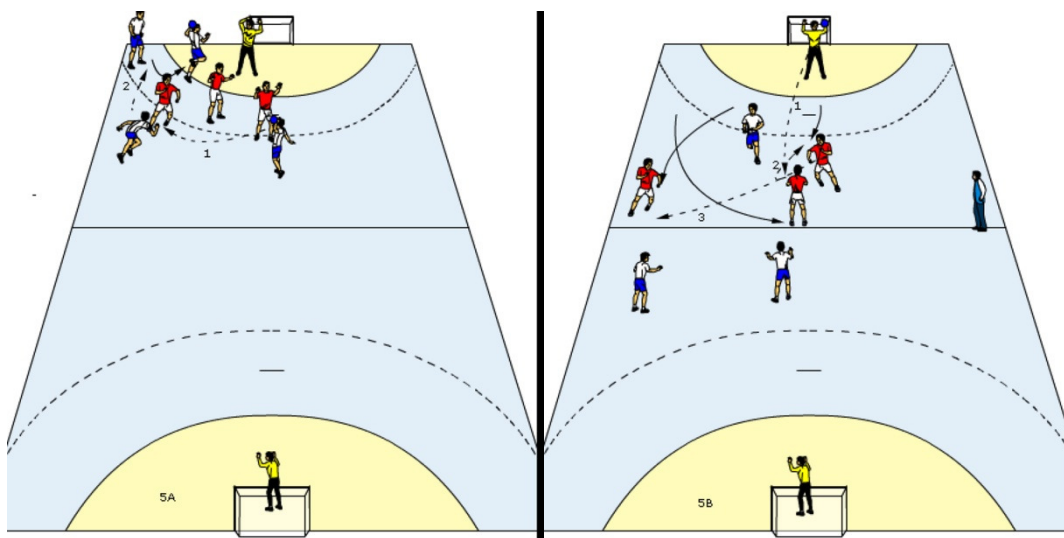
Exercise 2: Initial positions of the players are the same as it was before. Players built up couples and pass the ball to the central line. After a short stop they continue with passes (own signal “HOP” and good acceleration). Reaching the attacking positions they start to perform pistons movement and crossing – conclusion with the shoot. Continuation on the opposite side.



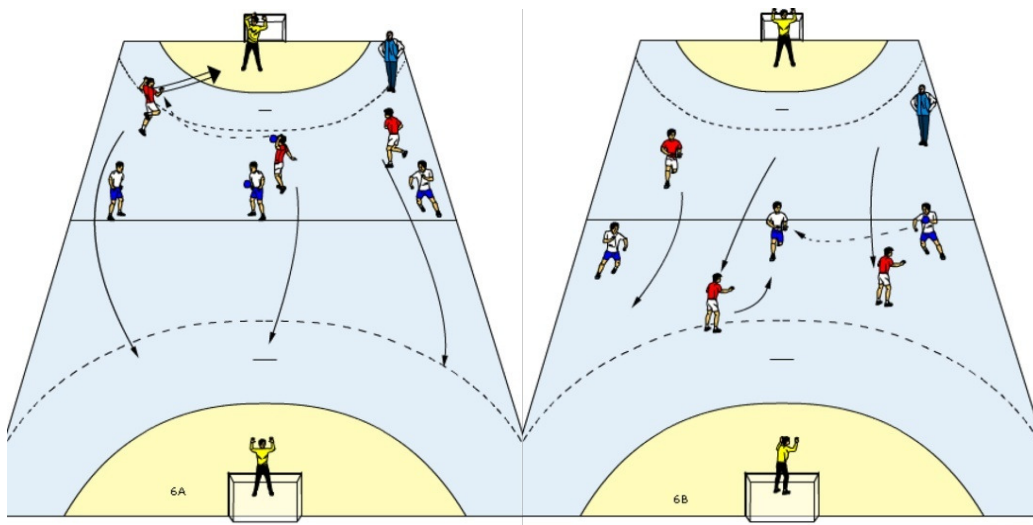
Exercise 3: Players stand in the middle of the court and pass the balls to the players which shot to the goal. In the first phase this shoots can help to warm up the goalkeeper. Before the each pass coach blow a whistle (Figure 3A). During the exercise we can use also passive or semi active defenders (Figure 3B) or even wing and pivot players who shoot on the goal (Figure 3C).



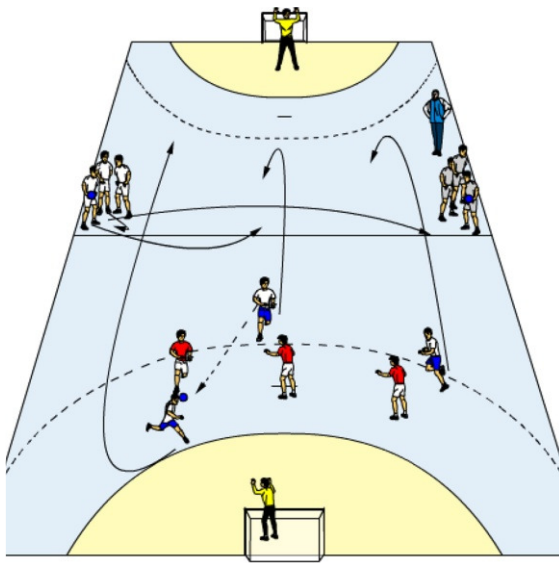
Exercise 4: Wing and back players occupied their initial attack positions. In defence there are FC and LB defender (5:1 defence). Attackers perform two passes in a pistons movement, than LB shot over the FC. After that defenders run to the central line and receive the ball from the goalkeeper. Attackers run in a defence. Trainer blow a whistle, players execute a free-throw and tray to score a goal in a game 2:2 on the other side of the court (Figure 4A and B). Same action could be performed with the attacker more – in this case we gain the situation 3:2 with a pivot (figure 4C).



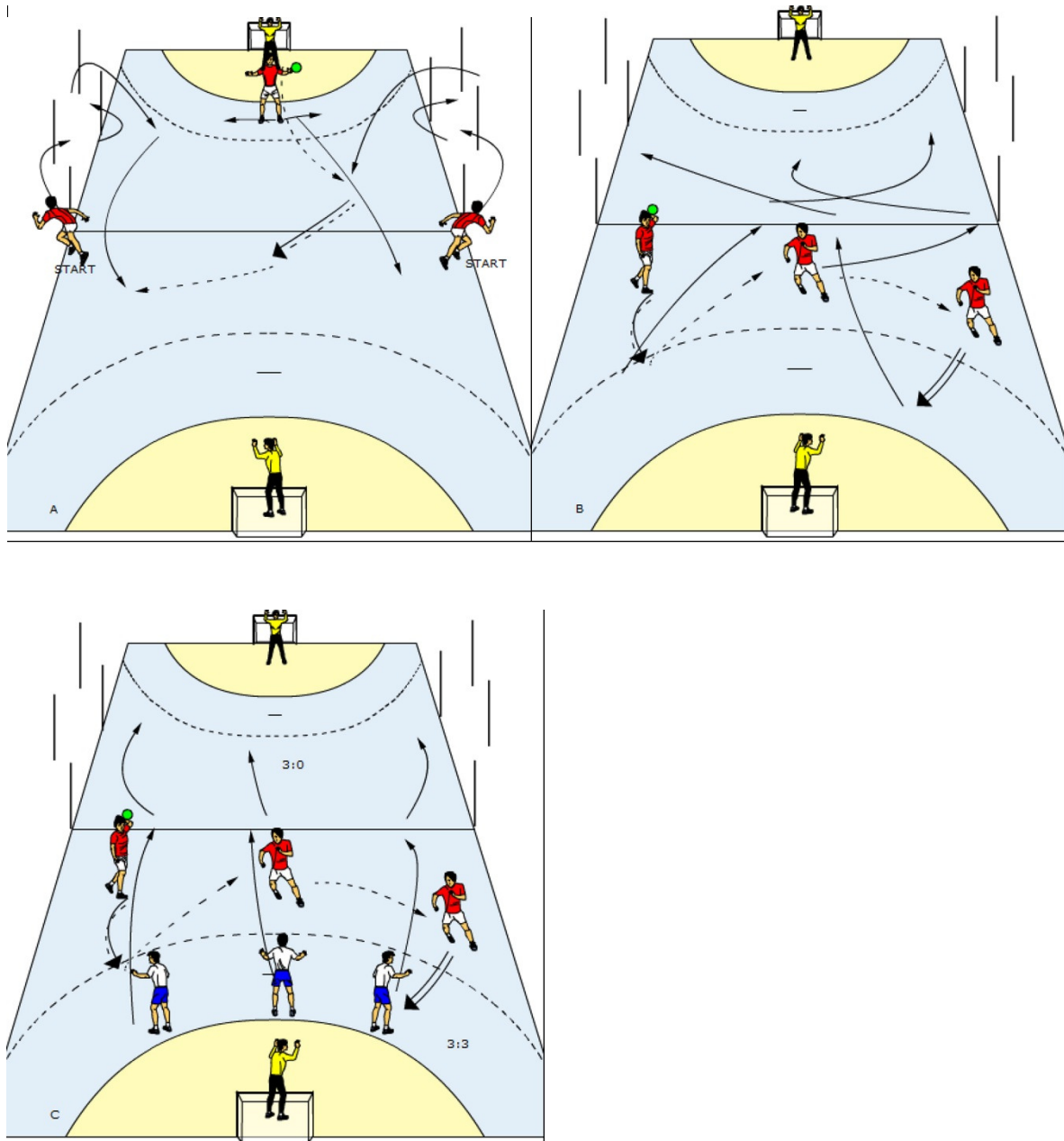
Exercise 5: CB, LB and LW are in attack and three defenders in defence. Attackers perform passes in pistons movement CB – LB – LW. 1 defender fails to intercept a pass between CB and LB (with an aggressive run forward). LB passes to LW who shot on a goal (Figure 5A). 1 defender precede running toward a central line where receive a pass from goalkeeper and execute fast throw-off with his team mates. Opponents try to return in a defence position as quick as possible. Attackers now try to gain an advantage and score a goal.



Exercise 6: We build up groups with three players in each group. At once on the court are two groups. First group execute in attack simple combination and shot to the goal. Immediately after that they must run across the centre line. Coach blow a whistle and a group at the centre execute a fast throw off. They play against the group which run in defence. In next repetition roles of attackers and defenders changed.



Exercise 7: Similar exercise as before. Now we build up four groups with three players in each group. Two groups are on the playing court and two beside it. First part of the exercise is the same as before. The difference is that the groups consequently continue with the exercise without rest. So when one attack is finished the attackers must run back in defence and the situation repeated with a group which was beside the court.



Exercise 8: Groups of three players run with changes of directions at the beginning of the exercise (two players between the stands along the side-line, one in front of the six meters line (Figure A)). When they finish first part immediately begin with the counter attack (Figure A and B). After completing a CA with a shot, players run back again and try to execute a fast throw-off (goalkeeper make a pass to the centre). In variant players can execute in CA play 3:3 and after that defending group start to execute fast throw-off (Figure C). Groups substitute each other in defence.